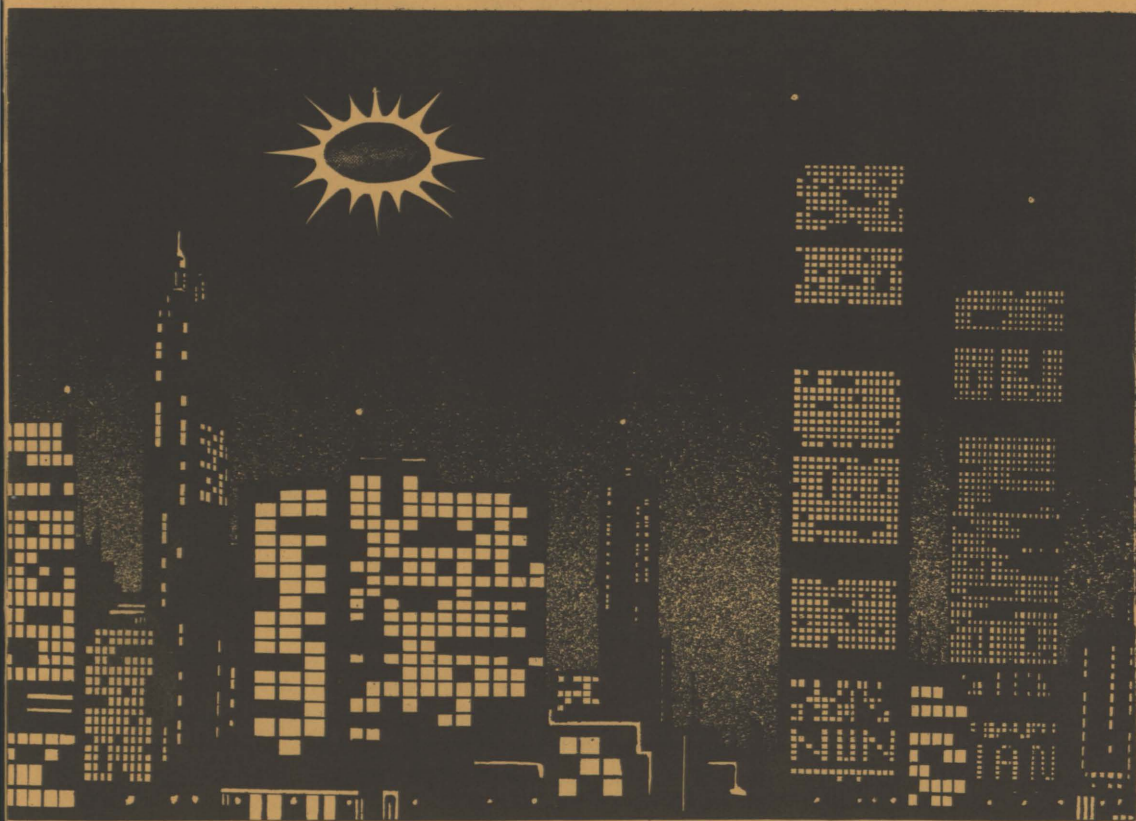


NORTHERN NEWS



Publication of NUFON...

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IN THIS ISSUE:-

Channel 4 and the paranormal (pp2-3), News & Reviews (pp3-5), "UFOs and reality" by Rodney Jones (pp5-7), Media Matters (pp7-8) Cases from: Ireland, Cheshire, Gtr Manchester, Lancs, Northants & W.Yorks (pp9-13); CASE HISTORY - North Wales aircraft/UFO encounter.

JR Comments...

On the 19 September I was invited to the HTV studios in Bristol for what turned out to be quite a gathering of the clans. The occasion was the recording of a pilot for a new series, "Do you believe it?" The programme raises some significant questions about the way we ought to present the paranormal...

"Do you believe it?" hopes to be a six-part feature on Channel 4; provided HTV can market the idea. At this stage I am not clear if the pilot show is intended to be transmitted merely on HTV, or on ITV network, or on Channel 4. But I gather it is due to go out in November. It will probably last thirty minutes, although almost two hours of material was recorded.

I am not sure where the concept for the series came from; although I hear that ASSAP have had something to do with it. HTV chose "Nesta Ellis" ("the well known writer and broadcaster on the paranormal", as they put it to me) (I have yet to find anybody who has not responded to this by the immortal words "Nesta who?") It was surprising, but perhaps understandable, that they chose as their subject for the pilot show the OOBEE (Out of the Body Experience). Surprising, because I do not recall a TV programme on this subject; largely because it is a notoriously non-visual one that is exceedingly difficult to put over via TV. Yet understandable, because Dr Sue Blackmore (whose epic book on this subject "Beyond the Body" is rightly hailed a classic) lives in Avon and works at Bristol University. Nevertheless, the choice was a strange one for a show which was presumably aimed at seizing the attention and procuring the support of Channel 4.

HTV certainly went to town on the expense account. They flew D. Scott Rogo over from California, so that he could take part in discussions with Sue Blackmore. Scott is well-known in UFO circles and has published several impressive books on the paranormal. He fervently believes that something leaves the body during an OOBEE, but Sue prefers to conclude that it is most likely an hallucination. Elsewhere in the studios a motley crew of paranormal researchers were garnered from the lengths and breadths of Britain and somehow wood to attend (possibly by the expenses offered; although in my case more out of a desire to see Bristol - a city I have always liked).

Present in the sea of thirty or more faces bobbing up and down before the cameras I encountered people such as Dr Hugh Pincoff, of ASSAP, Andrew Green, the ghost hunter, Dr Robert Gilbert, the psychologist, our own Nigel Watson and Dr Shirley Molyer. From such a collection of knowledge and experience the possibility of moulding a major programme was there. So what happened?

Before the cameras rolled Nigel, Shirley and I (who were sat together) were rather interested in the set. This was no coffin and dry ice machine (of notorious Granada TV fame). Instead it was a pseudo-Grecian temple, complete with columns, pillars and majestic pink and grey tones. It looked like something left over from a historical drama; but I was assured had been originally conceived for the show. Then Nesta Ellis came on; attired in a flaming pink dress with highly revealing side splits and a most mysterious garter half way up her leg! As we tried to determine the point of this (determining that it was not where her microphone was!) a fashion photographer was buzzing around the bar-stool upon which Ms Ellis sat as she proceeded to "show a leg" in quite brazen style. This went on for quite some time; to the amusement of some and the puzzled consternation or embarrassment of others!

Eventually we were told that credits were about to be rolled. And on the monitor screens up comes a passable imitation of Liza Minelli twirling around a show-biz set crooning some rather banal (again specially created) pop song with words to the effect... "Do you believe it?... Do you believe it?... The powers of your mind.. Yeh! Yeh!"

No - No.

Presumably, this and the fashion show were HTVs way of attracting the Channel 4 programme planners. But when this switched to a long, protracted and sometimes quite interesting discussion about OOBEEs, the jarring contrast became all too obvious.

As it turned out there were few loonies present. Someone did delight in telling how he OOBEd most nights and went spacewards whenever he could (he liked the freedom you see). For him Mars was a boring place (all sand and rocks) but Venus - those yellow clouds are really something else! However, in the main a mildly non-controversial discussion followed with everybody trying hard to be nice to one another. The calm mood of the set seemed to make everybody willing to acquiesce. Even Sue, normally very persuasive in her negative views, whilst not deserting these seemed unprepared to challenge the reality status of some of the tales.

It is hard to judge if the show was a "success" or not. For anyone familiar with the OOBEE it was not especially enlightening. Not even provocative. It did not even seem to me to be controversial; which is a besetting sin of any programme about the paranormal. I know that sounds odd. We would want the subject to be non-contentious. Yet the fact of the matter is that to make science sit up and listen the controversy is essential. I guess it is a question of whether the opening titles will hook anybody and keep them on the channel (working on the premise that most people might be too lazy to switch channels again). I am not sure that it will - and I hope we do not lose the chance of an intelligent channel 4 series thanks to this schizophrenic descent into popularism.

That the paranormal may now enter an era of TV pop is a danger, as it is a danger once anything begins to get accepted. God help us if we ever have to face - "Abduction of the week", or worse still; "The Gentle Touch" (an everyday story of fake metal benders). Even "Play your Zener cards right"! Ouch!

NEWS ROUND-UP



!! A new associated group to record (see back page for details) is WAPIT. (Wigan Aerial Phenomena Investigation Team). They have been in existence for a couple of years already and investigate cases in south-central Lancashire.

!! Walter Reid advises that his Junior UFO Club is now back in full action. With some financial support behind him he is now willing to offer FREE membership to any child interested in UFOs, and he says that already pushing 200 children are on his books. Please note his new address:- 11 The Green, Moortown, Leeds, W. Yorks LS17 6QL.

!! My post-bag often contains some "strange" letters. For some reason quite a few "inmates" write to me. (I don't know if they are trying to tell me something!) One recently came from Wormwood Scrubs, no less. The sender (whom I will not name - or number) said, in part "You people now nothing about UFOs. You still do not know how a UFO flies - but I do.... I do not know how a flying saucer works to. It is so simple. Because when I was outside many years ago I built a UFO. It was about 3 feet high and 6 feet in diameter. It was a remote control model. And to my skill and technology. I was told to keep my mouth shut at the time by somebody in a blue uniform.... I can not get my nology on what I know because it is TRUE. I am thinking of selling my words and nology to some scientist in Tokyo.... Because when I come out of prison I am going to build a proper one. I will be the richers man on earth..." (Its a wonder he hasn't escaped yet!)

Another is a request to join our investigation team. The sender says he is 16. He has 0 levels, drinks, smokes, is unemployed, likes fantasy and sci-fi, plays role-play games, is laid-back, dreamy, into heavy metal, takes drugs and adds "If I do see a UFO I could be sleepy/drunk/hallucinating or tripping - your knowledge of that could make investigating easier." He adds "PS - I am a Space Cadet and at times I don't take things seriously. I found out about you from the book "The age of the UFO" - so you can blame them!"



FOR YOUR PERUSAL:-

Major articles elsewhere

THE LEY HUNTER 96 (3 issues, £4, PO Box 13 Welshpool Powys Wales)

Editor Paul Devereux certainly never gives up. In a sort of UFO special he defends Project Gaia and his book Earthlights with a review of ufology, a review of his reviews, and then even begins reviewing the reviews of the reviews! He criticises more or less everybody (covering the spectrum from OSEAP, through MAGONIA to the ETH supporters). Even the reviews I have proffered (which several have told me were far too kind) are criticised. However, criticism sometimes does provoke serious points and Paul has valid things to say about the way too many have dismissed the earthlights idea. I just wish he would be a bit more diplomatic about how he says it. A certain world famous ufologist (no names) told me how Paul Devereux and Michael Persinger were very alike - ultra - dogmatic about the rightness of their work. Sadly this had allowed this researcher to reject much of what the earthlights hypothesis says. Doubtless my review of Paul's review of the reviews of the reviews will be reviewed (and criticised). But I hope not; as I am saying it purely to try to make Paul understand that he needs to treat ufology at least with respect. I believe there is truth in earthlights, but he will never get far in persuading most investigators by commenting (as he does p.20) "If this continues, then the research baton on UFOs will pass into the hands of earth mystery researchers. Our generosity in holding it aloft is running out". Please cool down Paul - and keep on persuading via your data.

ASSAP NEWS August 1984 (With ASSAP sub, 6 issues, £6.50:- 56 Telemann Sq London SE3) An article on Paul Devreux and earthlights by one of his biggest supporters (ASSAP editor Alan Cleaver). This previews the sequel to Earthlights (penned by Paul with Nigel Penniok) that seems to offer much more controversy for the UFO world in months to come. Whatever you think - there is no way you will be able to ignore earthlights!

UFO RESEARCH AUSTRALIA Vol 5 No 2 (\$18 Aus, 6 issues:- PO Box 229 Prospect S. Aust 5082) New issue of this superb magazine (one of the best half dozen journals in the world) contains two major articles. One by Mark Tyrell of OSEAP is an extension of a piece he wrote in NURM magazine some years ago, incorporating new data. It deals with ufologists, the public, publicity and UFOs. Also Keith Basterfield collates research ideas and speculation about car-stop cases. Topped up with a detailed collection and study of Australian "interrupted journey" cases by Bill Chalker, it is obvious that this magazine is an absolute must for any serious researcher. (32pp, A4 size)

The new 40pp catalogue from Arcturus Books is out. Packed with over 400 books (new and secondhand) plus rare magazines and mimographs this is easily the most comprehensive service for those wishing to boost their libraries. An international reply coupon would be appreciated:- 263 N. Ballston Avenue Sootia New York USA 12302

BOOKS OF THE MOMENT:



Whilst browsing the occult/horror section at WH Smiths (looking for a particular book) I discovered one with a UFO (or what looked like a supposed UFO) on the cover. A Star paperback by someone I had never heard of, and marketing at £1.95 for a rather thin book, I did not purchase it. But the title "The Uninvited 2" made me sufficiently intrigued to browse.

The book is presented much in the way that Clive Harold's "The Uninvited" was; although the title is merely to attract readers of that work (the biggest UFO best seller published in Britain over the past five years). The new book has nothing to do with

the Coombes family sightings in South Wales (subject of the original) but instead purports to be the encounters of a family from the Derbyshire Pennines to what (on my glances at least) seem little more than a few lights and the occasional bump in the bedroom. It is written up in the same dramatic horror style; although a note at the end adds that despite the witness names all being changed it did really happen - honest!

I would not urge you all to go out and buy it, but it is significant for two reasons (not counting the dangerous labelling of this novel/sorry fiction/ sorry true story as 'horror'). One is that it will doubtless sell thousands more copies than any of the serious UFO works it has as competition. The other is that NUFON gets mentioned!

In one conversation a terrified witness is urged to report the funny light he has just seen and informed about NUFON by some character in the 'plot'. However, the witness responds by saying that they won't be able to do anything and proceeding to tell instead the horror writer of the book! Subsequently, the witnesses claim they "don't want anybody to know" (another reason given for not obtaining NUFON). This has now become "telling everybody who wants to know", via a horror story.

For a few brief moments (before I threw the book back - then hid all the copies at the back of the pile!) I contemplated a lawsuit for defamation. Of course, that is silly. But the trend is all too clear - I just hope we prevent it from going too far. What next? Close Encounters of the third kind, part 2... Earthlights 27 ???

On a brighter note a delightful book out is "A woman of Spirit", an autobiography by psychic Doris Collins (Granada hardback, 1983, £7.95 - due in paperback shortly) I have read quite a few such books by psychics but this is a sheer delight, since it treats the subject so simply. Doris oozes normality, despite her amazing experiences.

Of course, it is interesting because many UFO contactees are super-psychics too (eg Uri Geller, or Gaynor Sunderland - who may grow up to be a Doris Collins, if her life so far is anything to go by). Regardless of our theories of UFO origin we cannot legitimately ignore these facts.

However, Doris notes in this book that since 1980 she has suddenly broadened her range of experiences. These include a typical UFO close encounter (well described) and in clear need of investigation. And a fascinating bedroom visitor confrontation with a group of small beings that has much in common with more than one or two CE4 cases investigated over recent years. The significance of this seems apparent.

A rewarding book to read, and surprisingly relevant to ufology.

NB: The following was sent to me as a letter responding to my book, The Pennine UFO Mystery. It was not intended as an article, but I felt that it was worth publishing. I am grateful to Rodney Jones (who intends to commence field investigations) for his kind permission...

UFOs AND REALITY (a few speculations) by Rodney Jones

I have been interested as a passive armchair observer for some time now, and have read countless books on the UFO subject. I have come to the personal view (at the moment) that the UFO phenomenon is a challenge to what we consider to be "reality".

There seem to be two levels of reality: objective and subjective (the former being usually considered as the Reality (with a big 'R')). Subjective reality is generally considered to be related to individual experience, and only when a sufficient set of common experiences have been collected do we confer on that set the term "Reality".

What right do we have to assume that Reality can be determined this way? Well, none really. But Reality works, does it not? Our science bears this out - or nearly does.

One of the interesting things about UFOs, especially CE4s, is the apparent lack of new data. There are no new ideas (like a new style pen or a gimmicky tin-opener). Indeed the sort of things the UFO demonstrates tend to be invisible (concealed lights or doors, seamless suits and so on). Even faces are almost expressionless. Ask any Japanese businessman worth his salt: if he sees a new piece of equipment in (say) an American store, then the knowledge of its existence is often sufficient to inspire him to design a similar object.

Of course, there could be many reasons for this without making a mystery out of it. However, the UFO story is effectively 'old hat' to science-fiction writers, who have been describing seamless suits, telepathic communication and so forth for some time now. In fact to me a very significant feature of the UFO reports is "cultural tracking": - that is, the tendency of UFOs to appear in vogue, in keeping with or slightly in advance of overt technology or expectation. If a cute alien looking like ET were to manifest next, how many would be too surprised?

Looking at the UFO problem this way I would probably conclude it to be a dream-type experience, merely because of its lack of useful data. But I am darned sure that if I saw a UFO at close range I'd hit the first person to tell me I'd been dreaming! Here is the incongruity: all the hallmarks of a dream, including the OZ Factor, discontinuous memory and disappointing novel information content, but yet it is NOT a dream. And there is physical evidence (sometimes) plus, perhaps, other witnesses.

I would not be presenting any new ideas to say the Collective Unconscious, Cosmic Consciousness, or whatever you like to call it, is the Dreamer (capital 'D') - responsible for the whole of what we call the real world (physical and non-physical). We are all part of the Dreamer, mistaken in thinking we each have our individual, independant minds. Perhaps we have to sleep in order to communicate in depth with the Dreamer (or, in other words, each other). The Dreamer supplies all the rules to make its creations self-consistant. Indeed many scientists are beginning to conclude that sub-atomic particles are better understood as thoughts, concepts and ideas rather than as physical entities. An atom in this universe may be a thought in the mind of the Dreamer.

Such a MENTAL universe (of which the observed universe is a shadow or camouflage) needs to be highly structured with many levels. As individuals we contribute to the Dreamers thoughts and it, in turn, feeds our minds. Usually this is accomplished through the level we call matter; but it can be music, poetry, art, literature, or even finer mediums (such as telepathy, clairvoyance etc). To appreciate each separate level one may need to tune one's individual consciousness in a particular way.

Some current investigations



12 August 1984, 6.40pm, a dry evening with clear skies and virtually no wind. JP, ex RAF, now aged 60, was in his garden at Bury, Gtr Manchester looking almost vertical towards the east when he saw a small silvery point stationary in the sky. A jet passed by at 30,000 ft and JP is certain the UFO was much higher. He watched for 40 mins as it moved very slightly north. During this time his step-son and wife watched it too. After about 1 hour a dark, balloon-like object seemed to fall to earth in the far distance near where the UFO was. The UFO was no longer visible. Whilst most of the time a silver point, it had flashed red and green at times. Peter Mough and Peter Warrington checked this out for MUFORA and provided the solution. What was it???

ANSWER: Peter Marlington checked but found no astronomical explanation reasonable. Peter discovered from Manchester Weather Centre that a balloon had been sent up as part of an experiment at Gpm. It had wire-mesh beneath it (see London cases recorded in p.8). This was a balloon which eventually burst and fell to earth.

In UFO REALITY (Chap 10) I described a case from Gartfadd, Ireland, that was not investigated many years ago when it took place. A UFO had (according to media reports) split a "Giant Oak" assunder, as witnessed by farmer Joseph Bennett. I am delighted to find that Bennett's nephew (John Coughren) read the book and has taken the trouble to write to me. He was told of the events by his uncle hours after they happened, but adds that he was furious about the misrepresentation offered by the press. The tree was not a "Giant oak" but an old elm that was rotten to the core. And all that took place was that a bit of it broke off a few feet from the ground. There was no noise (as the press claimed) and the "UFO" was merely a "small, dark, whirling cloud which passed from the south to north through the trees".

Mr Coughren says his late uncle would have "liked me to put the record straight" and this new information does rather demolish much of the "physical trace" evidence this case presents. It would seem in the light of this to be a good example of a "fair-weather whirlwind"; something of UFO interest to ufology indeed (especially in view of the recent "mystery circles" fiasco). Thank goodness the national press never got hold of the Gartfadd "Close Encounter" at the time!

But this fortuitous aftermath provides a salutary lesson on the dangers of treating media reports at their face value. One wonders how many other 'good' cases could be resolved with the advent of serendipity.

Peter Haugh and Derek Blake conducted an on-site investigation into this claim, reported from a phone interview last issue. Several discrepancies arise. Firstly, the primary witness JL (from Aintree, Merseyside) relates several preliminary sightings going back to when he and his wife lived at Kirkdale, by the River Mersey and Liverpool docks. The first (summer 1974) involved a bright light passing over and remaining stationary overhead for 15 minutes, before moving off down river. Later he saw another light following the river which was almost certainly an aircraft, and it is feasible the above sighting is an exaggerated misperception of aircraft and stars, as it was late in the evening and JL may possibly have been tired.

Moving on to the "blue glow" experience there were two separate claims. The first was in September 1979 (it was after this event that JL heard of the supposed Wirral 'landing'). On this occasion both he and his wife were woken at 2/3 am by their bedroom being lit "as bright as day". They noticed during the next hour that not just the house, but the whole area outside, was brilliantly illuminated by what JL calls a bluish ultra-violet glow similar to an arc-welder that periodically dimmed and brightened. Neither of them ventured outside, and it disappeared like a light being switched off. The second experience of this kind (which was in 1982 but may have been later in the Summer than the "April" quoted vaguely on the phone) was at a similar time, but involved a wedge-shaped object creating the light (see picture last issue). However JL described the noise somewhat differently as a "static medium-pitched growl" (?).

As for the hair falling out of his hands. This began several days after this second occurrence (during which he had gone outside to confront the UFO - head and hands exposed). JL claimed that this effect (which included blistering) cleared up (after nearly two years!) just before the interview. However, the opinion of MUFORA is that JL's occupation had more to do with it than a UFO. He owns a model-making shop and although he insists he has used the same resins for years without effect this seems to be the most probable solution to the riddle of why the UFO "radiation" did not cause blistering on his exposed face, or his hair there to fall out!

That JL is prone to faulty memory is demonstrated, partly by the changes in story and partly by his saying that he called Liverpool Airport to report the UFO and the voice at the other end had said "Oh hello Joe" (his name). JL used this as support for a presumed MIB sequel to his tale. But his wife cut in and reminded him that it was not the airport who had said this. They had given him the number of Gary Raymer (a local ufologist) and when HL called him he said "Oh hello Joe", because he was a customer at Joe's model shop!

AFTERMATH OF AN ENCOUNTER

Seasoned ufologists will recall the CE4 experience of Ken Edwards at Risley, Cheshire, in March 1978. It had the misfortune of occurring at the time the movie "Close Encounters of the third kind" was released and I have spoken of the results of this in my FSR article on the case and in UFO STUDY. However, I have wanted to add the sad sequel to this important case for some time, but held back until I thought a suitable time period had elapsed.

To recap Ken had seen a glowing white object as he rode back from a union meeting in his van. It hovered on the remote road in front of him, discharged a light beam which struck him, stopped his watch, burnt his fingers, exploded his radio-transceiver and left him stunned as it passed through a security fence into an atomic energy research building.

The events lead to subsequent vivid memories (reliving the event in dreams with strong emotions) but despite certain evidence of a time-loss (which Ken always thought to be simply due to disorientation) he was never put under hypnosis. He says that in the six months after the encounter four separate calls were made asking him to undergo this. He said he would "think about it" and the callers promised to ring back but never did. There were other very odd calls, including one that purported to be from NASA - although no proof of this was supplied and he never heard from them after the initial call. The "NASA scientist" appeared to have a Geordie accent!

Other amazing calls Ken had (confirmed by his wife) over the 12 months after the encounter were from several radio stations demanding information. Later (when on visits

To move from one level to another we have to make some adjustments of consciousness. We experience such a change when we fall asleep, reawaken, have hallucinations, die or participate in a UFO encounter or Quasi-Conscious Experience.

We have a clear choice. Nothing revolutionary. Either we have to explain the evolution of mind following the existence of matter. Or we have to explain some kind of mind (outside the brain) which later gave rise to our concept of matter.

Evidence must be circumstantial, because there can be no physical evidence by the non-physical nature of what we seek. It is like trying to prove the reality of the architects design by studying the bricks under a microscope. But I do not wish to imply an equation between the Dreamer and God. The Dreamer is, to me, the sum total of what we might term human consciousness everywhere (and not just on planet earth) and everywhen.

In conclusion I feel that UFOs are internal to consciousness. The percipient is first raised (or lowered) to a different level of consciousness (the Quasi-Conscious Experience), hence the perceived effects of this switch (the OZ Factor). There may be interactions between one conscious level and another which produce some physical effects. Even in a dream everything can appear quite normal and solid. It's only when one wakes up that the dream becomes a dream.

I see UFOs as a sort of driver; an attempt by the Dreamer to steer human consciousness along predetermined paths. Psychologists tell us that our individual dreams often drive us to modify our behaviour or tell us something about ourselves.

Or - UFOs might be an attempt by other aspects of the Dreamer (who knows where - the MENTAL universe must be at least as big as the physical universe) to make contact with us. Perhaps we need to look inward into inner space instead of peering into outer space. Perhaps in this way we shall discover other worlds as vibrant as our own, peopled with other intelligences also yearning for contact, or just to be recognised, or to know that they are not alone.

Perhaps we shall learn that, paradoxically, outer space is inner space.

MEDIA MATTERS:-

A look at UFOs in the public eye



One of the most fascinating of recent stories appeared in the Mail on Sunday (15 Jul), but was not followed up by anyone. It is of enormous interest to students of the Rendlesham Forest case. Headed "Double death in the air mystery" it explained how a "mystery link" had not been ruled out after "hours of painstaking investigation; including minute examination of wreckage, voice tapes and a surviving navigators report" into two fatal, but separate air crashes over the East Anglia coast on the same day, October 28 1983. Readers of SKY CRASH will realise that UFO activity was rife over Anglia around this time!

In one crash an RAF Harrier smashed into the ground seconds after firing cannons, for no explicable reason. In the other an RAF Tornado hit the sea. The navigator saw the plane dipping, called the pilot on the intercom but got no answer and fired the ejector seats. He survived, badly hurt, but the pilot's body was never found. Neither wreck contained any sign of malfunction or damage prior to the accidents! The prospect that both pilots suffered blackouts or died naturally (whilst flying) in a bizarre coincidence, has been considered. But there is no evidence. However, the MOD whilst trying hard to deny evidence of a "Bermuda Triangle" are allegedly so concerned by the "extreme coincidence" that they are speculating, and I quote, "that perhaps the area itself is in some way at fault". Obviously this is a story that must be pursued - especially after things have gone ominously quiet on the matter!

Three years involvement with the Rendlesham sky crash makes me very suspicious of that!

A few days later came the "York Minster" UFO scare. The difference between various headlines on the day the story broke (19 Jul) is quite revealing eg: "Was the Minster Zapped?" (Daily Mail), "York Minster 'hit by UFO'" (Mirror), "Church Fire blamed on aliens" (Yorkshire Post) and the looney "Ray gun zapped the Minster say UFO men" (the good old Star). Two men had independently reported seeing a cigar shaped object and an orange ray coming down from it towards the Church, on the night it suffered a disastrous £3 million fire. YUFOS are investigating the claims; but Canon Bowering said, on behalf of the Church, "Have these chaps seen opticians lately?" A fire officer added "We have certain leads, but a UFO attack is not one of them!" The Northern Echo (same day) had a much better report, adding the same Canon as saying "When it comes to UFOs I'm an agnostic." And they got one of the witnesses to say, "Well, maybe I only saw it for a couple of seconds, .. It was over that quick that I am not so sure." Eventually, when they got to the other witness his story was a bit different too. He spoke of strange "bolts of lightning 'aimed' at the roof" All of which makes one wonder where the other papers cooked up their "alien spaceships" from! Finally, the Mail on Sunday (29 Jul) said that the UFO was probably St Elmos Fire (a strange electrical discharge) which experts were now blaming for the "attack".

I was beginning to think that New Scientist had turned a corner with several positive articles of late. But they seem to have regressed a little during August. Firstly (2 Aug) they commented on the "Great South-East England UFO scare", which concerned a few drifting lights over London during July. BUFORA investigators dismissed the stories in a few minutes flat, when their explanation was obvious. But New Scientist had to hype up the "mystery", before eventually "proving" them to be weather balloons with a metal foil attachment. Apparently the first clue was when one fell to earth in the grounds of the local mental hospital!

Two weeks later (16 Aug) Ariadne got around to commenting on the 1984 "Silly Season" and remarked that only the circles in the corn-field could be regarded as of the "required standard". In view of the superb work by Ian Mrzyglod and PROBE over the years (published in several places now), my comments in this magazine and the number of times I have spoken to the media about these damn rings (occasionally being quoted) I had due cause to be upset. Both Ken Phillips (Daily Mail) and local investigator Philip Taylor (local press) responded to the 1984 'flap' on behalf of BUFORA and were in each case quoted as explaining them, initially as whirlwinds and (in the Dennis Healey affair - see p.7, last issue) as a hoax. But New Scientist had the audacity to claim that BUFORA had "reported darkly" that there was no explanation. It is rather fortunate for the journal I was in hospital - or else they would have got quite a blast from me for that blatant insulting lie. It makes you wonder if it is worthwhile trying to be open, objective and honest. We may as well have claimed that a giant spaceship had made the circles, earned £10,000 from some newspaper, and used it to fund some meaningful research!

To end on a note which picks up from this. Several papers (24 Aug and later) carried the same report (from James E Walters in Phoenix, Arizona). This explained how Dr J Allen Hynek had secured £1,000,000 a year from an anonymous donor to spend on serious investigation of the best cases. The Center for UFO Studies was immediately being moved to Phoenix, from its current base in Illinois, "because it is a centre for astronomical research, has a burgeoning high-technology industry and people had a more open attitude". Hynek added "The job has to be taken from the crackpot era to respectable science"

I am not sure how accurate these exciting reports are. My contacts in the USA say the idea is to get £1 million a year (which is somewhat different from having got it) and I had a letter from Mimi Hynek a couple of weeks prior to these articles, in which she makes no mention of this dramatic breakthrough. But if it is true then nobody deserves it more than Allen - and the money and the future of serious scientific research could not be in better hands.

to a couple of these towns, going on business, he inquired of the radio man who had called, but the stations denied all knowledge of the calls). One call was from an alleged "George King" (the Aetherius Society leader) - who also claimed to be a radio presenter from Birmingham. A private detective even called to say a ufologist had employed them to prove that Ken was a liar!

During this same year Ken developed symptoms of tiredness and stomach pains. Kidney cancer was diagnosed and surgery followed in early 1980. Immediately he developed cancer on his throat and despite an operation this got worse. In 1982 Ken died from the combined effects of several cancers. On the last occasion I spoke with him before his untimely death (in his late thirties) he was not connecting his illness with the UFO, although since his death his wife has confided in me that she believes it must have had something to do with it.

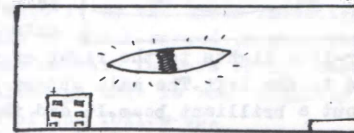
This case certainly poses many questions. And whether or not Ken was the first known person genuinely killed by a UFO in this country, the importance of follow-through calls to close encounter witnesses (or after-event monitoring as it really is) must be proven. For the record my view is that Ken died at the hands of a UAP.

Case 77-334 June 21 1977 08.10 Burnley, Lancs LCUFOS (c/o NUFOIS Nottingham)

A woman was driving a van with her 14 yr old daughter. It was a sunny, cloudless morning with the air very still. Over some nearby flats the witnesses saw a very strange object. It was cigar-shaped, estimated size of a Boeing 747 one-quarter mile away, coloured a very brilliant silver, but with a black band (it was labelled a "panel" by the driver - Mrs AB). They stopped the van to watch and the object was stationary for about 1-2 minutes. It then moved slowly back and forth and they drove off to catch up with it again. It now stopped once more - dead ahead! After holding this position for about half a minute it rose rapidly and vertically and then moved off at "fantastic speed" towards the Rossendale Valley. FSR actually featured a cover story depicting this object (or a remarkably similar one) seen by a couple on a motorcycle at 09.30 that morning. Riding from Salford to Bury they had a clear view of it. One might regard these connected reports as suggesting a balloon, perhaps trapped in early morning thermals. But NUFON Case 77-237 is interesting (see Northern UFO News, 46, March 1978). A man and three young girls visiting a grave at Nelson (not far from Burnley) were terrified as a strange object hovered 40 ft above the church. It was a silvery cigar, but with a dome on top, strange elongated portholes, a spike on one end and a blue flashing light on the other. This was at 13.00 on the same day. This time was during the 1977 wave, and perhaps one of the most interesting comments comes from Mrs AB in Burnley. She said that they watched the rush hour traffic go by and nobody looked up at the UFO, as they would if an aircraft flew over. This OZ Factor isolation effect tends to suggest that an anomalous stimulus might be involved.

Case 8254 Unknown 1982 06.00 Pudsey, West Yorkshire WYUFORG (Martin Dagless)

MC, for almost 20 years a screenprinter, was jogging his way over 2.5 miles to work as part of a fitness exercise. He observed over the post office a slightly fuzzy white oval which was stationary for about 3 minutes. Not wishing to be late for work he left it and went in. MC feels he might have mistaken the moon and WYUFORG agree this is possible, and an UFO evaluation seems certain. One interesting postscript. The following year MC left his job to become a postman!



Case 8255 August 28 1982 ?? Middlewich, Cheshire MUFORA

On a nice, sunny evening a young woman observed for about 20 seconds 8/9 white disc-like lights moving E-W at some height. There were similar observations elsewhere around this time which suggest a meteor break-up is possible, although this is unlikely due to lack of records of one. More probable is a flock of birds reflecting the setting sun. Such "formation UFOs" frequently turn out to have this explanation. But certainly an UFO of some sort.

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ANOTHER UFO BALLOON OVER YORKSHIRE

Case 8323 May 26 1983 03.15 Bradford, West Yorks WYUFORM (Nigel Mortimer)

There have been many observations of similar UFOs over this part of Yorkshire (one reason for the choice of the area for the MUFON conference!) This is of note because of the "Appletrewick Photo. case" (to be reviewed in a later issue) that occurred 4 days later, a few miles north of Bradford. But in this present case we have as witness Meg Steward, an articulate 76 year old. She suffers from arthritis and at this early hour to obtain a glass of water. Pulling the curtains aside to look at the weather



(as is her custom) she immediately saw an object over Horton Bank Top (a hilly region that has attracted many recent sightings). It was the size of the full moon, oval in shape and orange/red in colour. At intervals of three seconds it pulsed white. Meg noticed

two star-like lights to the right of the big object, but these soon vanished. Later one appeared to the left. The main object was now revolving and flashing like a lighthouse, giving out a brilliant beam. It did this 3/4 times and then at 03.25 it gave out a tremendous pulse of light, which made her turn away and caused her eyes to hurt. She claims they watered a little after the sighting was over. After the big pulse the object had vanished.

(NB...although there is no reference to this in the report, I am almost paranoid about moon misidentifications following certain events in the past. I checked here and found that the moon set at about one hour after the sighting, so it was low on the horizon at the time and may have looked orange/red if there was dust in the atmosphere. It is an explanation that always needs bearing in mind....JR)

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WELL DONE AQUARIAN PRESS!

Case 8324 July 20 1983 04.00 Wellingborough, Northants UFORM (Ray Shaw)

Neil Hammond, an engine-drivers assistant with British Rail, was in a loco with the driver, stopped by signals one mile north of Wellingborough Station. Whilst waiting an object was observed descending downwards about a quarter-mile away. Both Mr H and the driver saw it, indeed stepping out of their cab for a better view. But the driver declines to be interviewed. The object was described as octagonal in shape and very bright white in colour. As it dropped down vivid blue flashes (which Mr H calls "electricity") were given out. Billowing smoke or vapour was also seen beneath it. The UFO appeared to land in an old disused ironstone quarry. Subsequently Ray Shaw visited this quarry, but it was several months after the events and it was fenced off with strict "No trespassing" signs. The investigator felt Mr H a little strange in his beliefs because he referred to a man called "Gary" who lived locally and claimed to be an alien. Clearly Ray Shaw has not read UFOs: A British Viewpoint where the same mysterious "Gary" is discussed by Peter Warrington and myself. Ray considers this to be a UAP, probably of ball-lightning type. But it is interesting that Aquarian Books are based in the town and over the next six months or so after these events published

two "Evidence for" books on UFOs (by Hilary Evans and John Rimmer) - the first just a few weeks after this sighting. Now had they known of this case when they were promoting their work!... It seems they missed out on a sales boost case of the phenomenon! Perhaps the UFOs were trying to congratulate them!

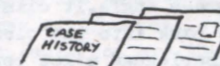
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Case 8406 July 24 1984 00.20 Worsley Hall, Gtr Manchester WAPIT

Four people talking (a 21yr old ex army man, a 19 yr old, a 32 yr old Spiritualist and a 60 yr old ex paratropper)...when two went outside for some fresh air. They observed a strange light and brought the attention of the others to it. It was a brilliant oval shape heading NE and in view until 00.23. They were positive that it was not an aircraft, and it was much too low for a satellite. WAPIT regard the case as unexplained. Further details from the group; quote case 5D 88 PQRL (106W)

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CASE HISTORIES



A MOST PECULIAR LIVER-BIRD MUFORA Investigation by Peter Hough & Derek Blake

Date: December 14 1977 (???) 14.10 Location: Mt Snowden, North Wales

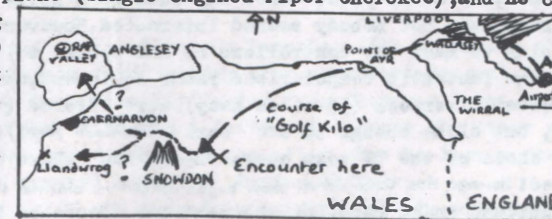
This case may well qualify for some sort of record as one of the most frustrating of all time. Considerable time and effort was put into it by the above investigators and by Jenny Randles, checking background facts. All of which served to make the thing more confusing than ever. Had none of this been done certain factors of the case may have led to it generating appreciable publicity; although this is now unlikely (and would be very unwise) in view of the consequences of the follow-up.

The following events ought to be considered in context with several recently reported aircraft/UFO encounters. Indeed there are a number of direct parallels between this sighting and one investigated by SIGAP in Surrey in August 1979 (see UFO REALITY pp23-24 for account and sketch by Ian Mrzyglod). How relevant this is remains unknown.

The case came to the attention of Jenny Randles early in 1984 when she was working with Radio City on a documentary about the Sunderland family encounters. By chance the producer met a colleague at Manchester Airport as he prepared to take the "Shuttle" to London to record an interview with an eminent psychologist. The discussion turned to UFOs and the producer was asked if he knew of the CH case. He did not, but he pursued it, and this led on to a MUFORA investigation, with several on-site visits by Peter Hough and Derek Blake and extensive background research.

CH is a very close relative of Carla Lane (we prefer not to be more specific in print to protect his identity). Carla, an internationally famous TV writer (noted for her series such as "Butterflies" and the comedy classic "The Liver Birds"), owns a huge mansion on Merseyside in which virtually all of her family (close and distant) reside! This link alone would be sufficient to attract the media to the case.

Firstly we should summarise the events as CH initially described them to us. He said he was a pilot with his own plane (single-engined Piper Cherokee); and he claimed to have had over 200 hours flying experience at the time of the UFO events about to be related. A check of his flying log book in fact demonstrates that it was 158 hours, and this faulty memory/or exaggeration proved to be a significant factor throughout the investigation. His aircraft (still the same) is based at Liverpool Airport.



He says that on the date given he left the Airport to visit Caernarvon on the Welsh coast, landing at Llandwrog - a journey he makes not infrequently. He left at 13.45, carrying with him a Dutch businessman (whose name he could not recall) and an English business man called "Brad" (who he thought stood for "Bradbury", but who has proved untracable, because CH thinks he is "at sea somewhere"). There was a light wind, with a blanket of cumulus cloud 500 ft thick. They crossed the Wallasey beacon and climbed above cloud at the Point of Ayr. They then climbed on to 4000 ft and flew towards Snowden (the highest mountain in Wales at just over 3500 ft). Their destination was just 8 miles west of here, but as there were often skiers on the slopes CH wanted to show them to his passengers.

He radioed through to RAF Valley (which monitors all air traffic in this area). He requested and obtained transit clearance to deviate from flight plan. He dropped towards the mountain when one mile off his port wing a dark object burst through the cloud at 45 degrees angle. It climbed to their height, flew parallel for a short time and then dived back into the cloud. It did this at a 90 degree turn - a move that shocked the experienced pilot because it was "impossible". No banking was involved and the speed was in excess of any jet he had seen. Over Blackpool he had once had a Lightning streak close by at 600 MPH. But this was way over that. Its navigational ability in the thick cloud also staggered him. There was no noise and, although he expected it, no trace of air turbulence.

Still shaking he called RAF Valley saying "Valley Radar this is Golf Kilo - we have conflicting traffic. Am I still cleared for transit?" Valley confirmed that they were and added there was no conflicting traffic. But almost immediately the object reappeared, just a few hundred yards directly in front of the Cherokee! It had climbed vertically out of cloud, broken all air traffic regulations and then dropped out of sight again. CH instantly called Valley again saying he did have conflicting traffic and perhaps he ought to report a near-miss. He concluded "the thing didn't look like an aircraft either".

A new voice (described as "more bossy") came back on and asked "Golf Kilo - this is Valley Radar. Are you carrying onboard camera equipment?" CH replied, no, and the answer came back, "Right, Golf Kilo, you are cleared to land at Valley, if you wish". After consulting his passengers CH (who was gripping the controls with white knuckles) agreed to the course diversion of about 15 miles. On route it seemed that Valley were not expecting a light plane as they asked if his "landing gear" was down. Upon landing the craft was surrounded by a group of men wearing protective clothes and carrying what CH took to be "fire-fighting" equipment. However, a description of this (including umbilical cords attached from the men to a tank on a trailer) suggests to Derek Blake something else. Derek (an ex MOD weapons man) says the equipment appears to be radiation monitoring gear. Earlier CH had been asked if he had suffered any after-effects from the encounter and had agreed, but would not elaborate. He seemed very concerned by this suggestion that radiation might have been involved.

The three men were on the ground at Valley for up to an hour and were offered refreshments, but at no point asked any questions about the incident. CH did try to provoke responses but nobody seemed interested. However, he requested to see the radar room (hoping to meet the controllers he had spoken to) and whilst this did not occur he was shown fantastic computerised radar equipment, upon which he alleges pictures of Church Street, Liverpool (55 miles away) were offered (like a TV image from a birds-eye view, but close enough to see cars and individual people) (Rather like the opening sequence shots of the TV soap opera "Brookside" where an aerial view of Church Street is offered! However, this Channel 4 show began after this claimed sighting.)

The incident ended here. But the next day (December 15) CH claims he was talking on the phone to a close friend, Robin, (also a pilot) when the exact same UFO came

back - now hovering over Carla Lane's mansion! The only difference between this and the previous days UFO was that it was white whilst the one over Snowden was black. Both were multi-faceted, seemingly rotating, about 30-40 ft across and constantly changing shape. He realises that this means the object ought to have



been more visible to the radar at RAF Valley, as it was bigger than his Cherokee! However, the UFO over the mansion was not peculiar to him. Several relatives from the house went out with CH and his wife and saw it as it hovered in the south east for half an hour, moving about in a series of angular box-like motions. They considered the options; including a weather balloon but say that there was a very strong wind blowing (he estimates 50 MPH) and so it ought to have moved. (Unless, of course, it was a kite - an obvious idea CH does not seem to have considered)

Whilst the UFO was there CH called both Liverpool and Manchester Airports. Both claimed no air traffic and nothing on radar. The man at Liverpool even went out of the tower with binoculars but came back saying he could not see the object. (The airport is about 5 miles south of Carla Lane's mansion) Nevertheless both airports said they were being inundated with calls about the mystery UFO.

CH says the object eventually just "melted" away. However, the next day, so he claims, there was a story and editorial in the Liverpool Echo about the sightings.

Investigations...

Such are the bare bones of this fantastic story. There was much to go on, but it all proved to be false optimism. From the very start CH was unsure whether he had two or four others with him on the plane. The mysterious "Brad" was supposed to be a taxi-driver, but when we couldn't find him, he was now "at sea". He changed his story from being calm and steady to being terrified when he was communicating with Valley. In the end CH did recall the Dutchman's name and address (although he was unsure of the spelling). Checks via the Dutch consul found the address invalid.

Despite the incredible story it is quite plausible up to the landing at Valley. Indeed it is remarkably similar to the August 1979 Surrey mid-air case referenced before (the multi-faceted UFO being virtually identical). CH stuck with his story about the ridiculously sophisticated "radar", despite wondering why he was shown such an obviously vital feature of NATO's secret defences without security clearance!

Both the MOD and RAF Valley were contacted, of course. Valley were "unable to comment", claiming their records did not go back to 1977. The MOD said "we have no information on the incident".

The dating was a puzzle because nobody remembered a major sighting on December 15 1977 and it seemed strange that NUFON had no record of it. So Jenny Randles spent some time at the Liverpool reference library checking every issue of both Liverpool papers (the Echo and Daily Post) during December 1977, and a few days into the months either side. There was no such case. What is more the weather records, whilst agreeing to a point with CH's description of the 14th (although not the thick cloud) did not show strong winds on the 15th.

However, Jenny found two interesting anecdotes. On December 15th a Vernair plane left Manchester for Ireland but turned round midway (for no stated reason). CH claimed to know the pilot of Vernair (which is normally routed from Liverpool), but checks showed that the man he knew flew for Vernair a different company. The other event concerned an F-111 jet of the USAF was ditched by the pilot when he lost control and ejected. The place demolished several houses at Epping, Suffolk.

These facts were taken back to CH who seemed astonished. But his wife stated she was sure December was wrong because she remembered leaves. When the friend Robin was

[illegible]